



California High-Speed Rail **BRIEFING: OCTOBER 15, 2019 AGENDA ITEM #2**

TO: Chair Mendonca and Board Members

FROM: Frank Vacca, Chief of Rail Operations & Early Train Operator

DATE: October 15, 2019

RE: Early Train Operator Side-by-Side Interim Analysis

Summary

The Authority's Early Train Operator (ETO), Deutsche Bahn, has completed its initial work related to the qualitative study of operations in the Southern California high-speed rail corridor. This analysis is to provide a side-by-side comparison of potential interim high-speed rail service options in the Peninsula, Central Valley and Southern California sections as requested by the Board. The ETO has consulted and coordinated with rail operators (stakeholders) on these segments including Metro, Metrolink and LOSSAN, the California State Transportation Agency and Caltrans. The ETO study is being completed in two phases. The first phase is a qualitative analysis and the second phase will be a more detailed quantitative analysis. This memo, and accompanying PowerPoint presentation, provide a summary of the initial Phase 1 Interim Report analysis.

- Interim Report (qualitative analysis) – Reflects information from consultation with the stakeholders in order to develop assumptions, outline service concepts for each scenario, and identify preliminary observations. This analysis includes a comparison to previous analysis conducted by the ETO for the 2019 Project Update Report for the Central Valley and Northern California corridors. The Interim Report, which is currently in final review, will be available by October 31, 2019. It does not yet include full detailed costs, ridership and other benefits.
- Final Report (quantitative analysis) – The final report will include additional consultation with the stakeholders, and collection and analysis of the information necessary to develop ridership, revenue, capital expenditures, construction schedule and operating costs. The Final Report will summarize the benefits including: greenhouse gas benefits, congestion relief and any potential for private investment and local matching funds. While most of the work of the qualitative Interim Report focuses on Southern California, the Final Report will also cover additional Central Valley and Northern California analysis being prepared to complete the side-by-side comparison. This analysis will be completed concurrent with the Draft 2020 Business Plan.

Background

In May 2019, the High-Speed Rail Authority Board requested a side-by-side study to investigate and compare options for potential early service investments in the Central Valley, San Francisco Bay Area and Los Angeles/Anaheim high-speed rail corridors. The focus of this work is to assess comparable investments within

each corridor that could provide early interim high-speed rail service. This analysis is to provide information to the Board to support upcoming future investment decisions.

Prior Board Action

N/A

Discussion

Currently, the side-by-side analysis has focused on identifying the set of investments that could provide a demonstrable high-speed rail investment in a regional context and provide improved regional operations. This interim work has been completed and initial results are available to make an initial qualitative comparison between the three regions. This initial effort had been completed in the Northern California and Central Valley regions that was reported in the Project Update Report in May 2019.

The prior analysis summarized that for Northern California the additional capital investment, beyond what is already underway with the Caltrain electrification project, would yield limited ridership growth and minimal improvement in travel times. However, the analysis concluded that an investment to extend the Central Valley segment to Merced and Bakersfield would offer a significantly improved service and increased benefits to Central Valley passengers.

The Southern California analysis provides a similar comparison. To achieve a high-speed rail benefit within the Southern California regional context would require more funding than what currently remains available. It also shows that to maximize benefits of interim high-speed rail investments in the Southern California and Northern California corridors requires additional capital to improve regional services to complement high-speed rail investments. Finally, the incremental ridership benefits in these already congested corridors, without the benefit of access to new markets, does not result in significant incremental ridership.

Legal Approval

N/A

Budget and Fiscal Impact

This informational item on the Early Train Operator Side-by-Side Study interim analysis, by itself, does not have a budget or fiscal impact.

| REVIEWER INFORMATION | SIGNATURE |
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| Reviewer Name and Title: Thomas Fellenz Chief Legal Counsel | Signature verifying legal analysis: Original signed October 9, 2019 |
| Reviewer Name and Title: Brian Annis Chief Financial Officer | Signature verifying budget analysis: Original signed October 9, 2019 |

Recommendations

N/A

Attachments

California High-Speed Rail Side-By-Side Study, Preliminary Report PowerPoint